

REMARKS

This paper is filed in response to the Office Action dated December 2, 2003. Because this paper is filed on March 2, 2004, the paper is timely filed.

I. Status of Amendments

Claims 1-9 and 11-19 were pending prior to this amendment. By this amendment, applicants amend claims 1, 2, 5, 11, 12, 14 and 15. Thus, claims 1-9 and 11-19 remain pending.

Because applicants previously paid fees for 4 independent and 23 total claims, applicants' amendments do not require a further fee to be paid.

II. Response to the December 2 Office Action

In the December 2 Office Action, claims 5 and 15 were objected to for a typographical error. By this amendment, applicant amends claims 5 and 15 to correct the typographical error and traverse the objection.

Additionally, claims 1-9 and 11-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being allegedly indefinite. Applicant has amended claims 1, 11, and 14 to correct the antecedent basis problems noted by the examiner, thereby traversing the rejection in part. Applicant submits that the scope of these claims has not been changed by replacing "the" with "an" in "the outcome" and "the option", nor by amending claims 1 and 11 to recite that "the product" of two values is the first value "multiplied by" the second value. Applicant has also amended claims 2 and 12 to remove "as desired" from the claims, thereby traversing the remainder of the rejection. In this regard, it is submitted that the claims may now be broader than originally proposed.

Other Issues

In reviewing the materials received from the United States Patent and Trademark Office ("USPTO") in regard to this application, applicant was unable to find an initialed copy

of the Form PTO-1149 attached to applicant's Information Disclosure Statement ("IDS") of January 7, 2002, nor a copy of the Form PTO-892 listing the Weiss reference cited in the March 13, 2003 Office Action. A check of the USPTO PAIR system indicates that the January 7 IDS was received by the USPTO, and applicant submits a copy of the postcard receipt in regard to the January 7 IDS as well. Applicant would appreciate receiving an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449 from the January 7 IDS and a copy of the Form PTO-892 from the March 13 Office Action.

Additionally, applicant submits herewith a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement for consideration.

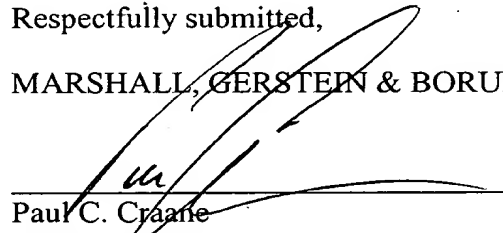
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the above application is in condition for allowance, and reconsideration is respectfully requested. If there is any matter that the Examiner would like to discuss, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned representative at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

MARSHALL, GERSTEIN & BORUN

Date: March 2, 2004

By:



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